

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMCONSUL ASMARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4472
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T ASMARA 0331

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AEMR PINT ET
SUBJECT: CLOSURE OF KAGNEW AND CONGEN

REF: ADDIS ABABA 2449

1. THE FACT THAT THE EPMG IS CLOSING OUT MAAG, USIS, NAMRU, KAGNEW AND THE CONGEN IS NOW COMMON KNOWLEDGE IN ASMARA AS IT HAS BEEN BROADCAST ON ADDIS RADIO. AS OF THIS TIME THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL CONTACT FROM LOCAL EPMG AUTHORITIES CONCERNING THESE ACTIONS, NOR HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONFRONTATION WITH ANY ELEMENT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY CONCERNING THE CLOSURE. APO AND CONGEN STAFF MET WITH RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS FROM KAGNEW AT 0700 HOURS LOCAL AND AGREED TO DEAL WITH THE CLOSURE IN FOUR ASPECTS, IN DESCENDING ORDER OF PRIORITY THEY ARE: (1) DESTRUCTION OF CLASSIFIED MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT; (2) EVACUATION OF PERSONNEL AND TERMINATION OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES; (3) SHIPMENT OR DISPOSAL OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY; AND (4) SHIPMENT OF PERSONAL EFFECTS.

2. DESTRUCTION: OIC NAVCOMMUNIT HAS BEGUN DESTRUCTION OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS AND HAS REVIEWED HIS PRIORITIES FOR DESTRUCTION OF CLASSIFIED EQUIPMENT. HE HAS ARRANGED FOR THE EMERGENCY DESTRUCTION OF ALL CLASSIFIED EQUIPMENT AT THE OPERATIONAL SITE IN THE EVENT OF A FORCEFUL INTRUSION BY UNAUTHORIZED PERSONNEL. THE CONGEN

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HAS BEGUN DESTROYING ALL BUT ESSENTIAL CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS THIS MORNING. THE CONGEN HAS ALSO MADE PREPARATIONS FOR EMERGENCY DESTRUCTION ON CASE OF INTRUSION.

3. PERSONNEL: ALL USG PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN INFORMED OF THE CLOSURE OF KAGNEW AND THE CONGEN AND HAVE BEEN INFORMED TO STAND FAST AND AWAIT INSTRUCTIONS. ALL TRAVEL BETWEEN THE TRACTS AND THE

CONGEN WILL BE KEPT TO A MINIMUM AND NO ONE WILL BE PERMITTED TO TRAVEL INTO THE CITY. ALL PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT TRANSPORTATION OUT OF ETHIOPIA IS BEING ARRANGED BY THE USG AND THAT THEY WILL BE KEPT INFORMED. THROUGH THE KAGNEW AND CONGEN CHAIN OF COMMAND ALL USG EMPLOYEES HAVE BEEN FORCEFULLY WARNED THAT THEIR PERSONAL CONDUCT MUST BE DISCREET AND DISCIPLINED AS ANY INDIVIDUAL CAN JEOPARDIZE THE SAFETY OF ALL THE AMERICANS HERE. THE CONGEN HAS SUMMONED ITS KEY LOCAL EMPLOYEES AND ASSURED THEM THAT THE EMBASSY WILL PROVIDE APPROPRIATE FOLLOW-UP ON EMPLOYMENT, SEVERANCE, AND OTHER BENEFITS TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED BY THE EPMG. IN RETURN WE HAVE ASKED THEM TO STAND BY US IN THE CLOSEOUT. THUS FAR THEY HAVE RESPONDED FAVORABLY. KAGNEW EMPLOYEES WILL BE ASSURED THAT ALL SEVERANCE AND OTHER BENEFITS WILL BE PAID IN ACCORDANCE WITH ETHIOPIAN LAW TO THE EXTENT THAT THE EPMG PERMITS KAGNEW TO DO SO.

4. USG PROPERTY: OIC NAVCOMMUNIT IS PREPARING VARIOUS CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR THE REMOVAL OF VITAL EQUIPMENT DEPENDING ON VARIOUS EVENTUALITIES. HE IS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT REMOVAL OF ANY EQUIPMENT IF THE EPMG ADHERES TO THE APRIL 27 DEADLINE. HE WILL COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY ON THIS ASPECT TO CONCERNED ADDRESSEES. THE CONGEN IS REVIEWING THE FEASIBILITY OF REMOVING ANY USG EQUIPMENT AT THIS TIME. TIME AND THE AVAILABILITY OF AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL TO DISMANTLE AND PACK COMMO EQUIPMENT MAKES ITS REMOVAL PROBLEMATIC. TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE IN THE TIME AVAILABLE, CONGEN WILL COMPILE INVENTORIES OF USG EQUIPMENT FOR FUTURE CLAIM FOR COMPENSATION.

5. PERSONNEL EFFECTS: ALL USG PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED
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TO INVENTORY THEIR EFFECTS AND TO PREPARE TWO SUITCASES AS ACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE. IF TIME AND THE EPMG PERMIT, WE WILL ATTEMPT TO SHIP PERSONNEL EFFECTS BY COMMERCIAL MEANS. AT NO POINT HAVE PERSONNEL BEEN ASSURED THAT THEY WILL BE PERMITTED TO LEAVE WITH MORE THAN THE CLOTHES THEY ARE WEARING.

6. SECURITY: SECURITY PERSONNEL AT THE CONGEN AND KAGNEW ARE ON THE ALERT FOR UNAUTHORIZED INTRUSION OR OTHER FORMS OF DISTURBANCE. THEY HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO AVOID CONFRONTATION AT ALL COSTS, BUT TO SUSPEND ALL ACTION UNTIL A RESPONSIBLE USG OFFICIAL CAN DEAL WITH THE SITUATION. OIC IS ATTEMPTING TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH SECOND DIVISION LIAISON OFFICER (A GOOD CONTACT AND FRIEND OF THE USG) FOR MATTERS OF SECURITY AND RESIDENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF KAGNEW UNTIL ACTUAL SHUT DOWN.

7. CONTACT WITH EPMG: CONGEN IS ATTEMPTING TO CONTACT DIRECTOR GENERAL OF LOCAL MOFA TO SEEK CLARIFICATION OF EPMG INTENTIONS AND TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC PROBLEMS. LATTER INCLUDE AUTHORIZING CHARTER AIRCRAFT TO FLY TO MASSAWA TO PICK UP TWO AMCIT CISCO EMPLOYEES

(BLAND AND SPIRES) WHO ARE ON LOCAL LEAVE, AND RETURN THEM TO ASMARA FOR EVACUATION; DEPARTURE FORMALITIES FOR AMCITS AND FOUR DEPENDENTS (TWO ETHIOPIAN AND TWO ITALIAN NATIONALS). WE WILL ALSO INQUIRE ABOUT DESIGNATION BY EPMG OFFICIALS TO FACILITATE PHASEOUT.

8. PRIVATE AMCITS: ALL PRIVATE AMCITS (15 TOTAL) WILL BE INFORMED TODAY OF CLOSURE OF CONGEN, BUT WE WILL AVOID ADVISING THEM ON THEIR ACTIONS.

9. ATMOSPHERICS: ALL REMAINS QUIET IN ASMARA AND NO INCIDENTS HAVE OCCURRED INVOLVING USG PERSONNEL. CONGEN IS RECEIVING CALLS TO PURCHASE EQUIPMENT AND FURNISHINGS AND FSLs ARE INQUIRING ABOUT EPMG ACTION. WE WILL MONITOR ATMOSPHERICS AND KEEP ADDRESSEES ADVISED IF RELATIONS SOUR.

10. THIS MESSAGE COORDINATED WITH OIC NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA.
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